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U.S./USSR/
DISINFORMATION

HARTMAN: We all grew up, here in the United States, anyway, hearing stories about the intrigues of the Soviet spy system, about the Kremlin propaganda machine. There is another way the Soviet government tries to influence what happens around the world. It's something called disinformation. It's a well-organized, worldwide system of planted news stories, half-truths, lies, even forged documents at times. Some experts believe the Kremlin is escalating its war of disinformation. Richard Shultz is with the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. He's co-author of a major new book on disinformation. Richard Burt is our assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs. Arkady Shevchenko is a Soviet defector. He now lives in the United States and he had a lot of firsthand experience with disinformation when he was a very high-ranking member of the Soviet mission at the U.N. Mr. Shevchenko, welcome back, and Mr. Burt, welcome. Dr. Shultz, good morning. Dr. Shultz, as I just mentioned, we've said that there are lies, half-truths, planted stories and so forth under this umbrella of disinformation. Specifically, give us an example of something, would you? RICHARD SHULTZ: Well, an example could be an agent of influence. Disinformation is a whole range of political and propaganda techniques, what we call influence techniques, that are used to try to affect politics in another country. Especially they're used against major adversaries. So the objective would be to try to undermine the political leadership of a major adversary like the United States, to undermine the institutions, to influence the policies, to split the United States from its allies. And so for 20 years, for example, the Soviets ran a major campaign and it's still going today to attempt to split the United States from its NATO allies.

HARTMAN: How big an operation is this in the Soviet Union? SHULTZ: It's a big operation. They have a number of key bureaucratic elements that are involved, including the KGB and the international department, but the important thing is that it extends well beyond the Soviet Union, where you find in the West many agents and intelligence officers and even diplomats.

HARTMAN: What about here? What about here in the United States? How much is going on here, for instance? SHULTZ: Quite a bit. We estimate that a large part of the Soviet official presence, its intelligence, is involved in disinformation, possibly with the bloc, the East European

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